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*"The Voice of Working Women"*

## **O** *Older Women Workers*



### **Older Women Workers**

The Women's Bureau was pleased to honor the first class of graduates for the Employer-Driven Older Women Workers Demonstration Project in Chicago (last November) and Dallas (in early January).

The pilot project was developed by the Women's Bureau in partnership with CVS Pharmacy to help older immigrant women develop the job skills and information technology skills that are critical for employment in the 21st Century. Upon the completion of the training, CVS Pharmacy and other retail businesses will be able to tap a new source of workers for a diverse workforce.

At the graduation ceremony in Chicago, Women's Bureau Director Shinae Chun and Steve Wing, Director of Government Programs at CVS, addressed the graduates and awarded certificates. The first graduating class included 12 women from the Chinese, Korean and Filipino communities.



*"This project will empower Asian American women with the skills they need to find good paying jobs, open the door to more opportunities, and help them succeed in today's workforce," said Women's Bureau Director Shinae Chun.*

The graduates felt the training helped them a great deal in preparing them to enter or re-enter the workforce. Yu-yuk Kwong commented, "Two weeks

*ago, I didn't know anything about computers. Now I have learned the basics and I am not afraid to move the mouse."*

Ms. Kwong has since been offered a job at CVS.

Aleli Panganiban said, *"Thank you for this opportunity of spending these ten days learning once again the modern way of being employed and be active in our society. More power to you."* Jennifer Lee wrote to Nancy Chen, Regional Administrator, *"I believe the training will benefit me in my search for jobs in the future."*

To recruit participants and provide training, the Women's Bureau in Region V collaborated with the Chicago-based Chinese American Service League (CASL). Working with Techserv, a computer training company, CASL and the Women's Bureau developed the curriculum for a two-week training session.



The Women's Bureau is also working with SER Jobs for Progress to offer a training program for Latina women, age 50 and older, in Dallas. The training consists of one week of computer literacy instruction and three weeks of EnterTech training which includes work readiness skills such as communication, decision making, teamwork, safety awareness, quality

assurance and preparation for potential interviews at the new CVS Pharmacy distribution center in Ennis, Texas.

Collaboration partners include the City of Ennis Economic Development office, the Ennis Public Library, the Ennis Chamber of Commerce, Helping Hands, St. John Catholic High School, the University of Texas at Austin and CVS Pharmacy.

Director Shinae Chun participated in the graduation ceremony of the first class on January 6, 2004. The Honorable Russell Thomas, Mayor of Ennis, was also on hand to congratulate the graduates. This project is an excellent example of the public sector, private sector and the non-profit community working together to achieve a common goal.

Both projects, in Chicago and Dallas, will continue in the spring, 2004.

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